

Executive Committee Meeting
15 May 2009; 8:30 am
BLM Wyoming State Office, Cheyenne

John Linn, the new Executive Committee Chair, began the meeting with a welcome and introduction of attendees. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the agenda was approved. Mary Thoman, the representative for the Conservation Districts, was excused. No parties participated via phone and those in attendance were asked to register on the provided sign-in sheets.

Science Workshop Highlights

Frank D'Erchia was thanked for all the time and effort he put into the Science Workshop. Those in attendance felt it was a success and lots of useful information was presented. A discussion was held on how to help offset the cost of this and future science workshops. The funding for the 2009 workshop came from the USGS budget. The USGS 2009 budget was cut and Reg Rothwell offered \$1,000 from his budget to help offset the shortfall for the workshop. It was asked that an itemized statement be provided to all the agencies to split the costs. Suggestions for future workshops are to hold less extensive workshops (i.e., 1 day instead of 3 days), hold them within the WLCI area and promote local attendance, schedule the meeting in advance (more than a year) and continually promote it so other meetings aren't scheduled at the same time, raise the attendance fee, and hold meetings every 3-4 years instead of every 2. The last suggestion was discussed and not supported because it would not allow the science to be shared and used in a timely manner.

The feedback from attendees included that it was 'helpful and of value' and a good way to get the science to those who needed it.

Round Robin

Steve Ferrell – has spent a lot of time with the JIO and PAPO recently. The position for the Game and Fish representative on the Coordination Team was approved by the governor and the position was offered. It should be filled by July 2009.

Brian Kelly – Thanked those who put on the Science Workshop. He thought they did a great job. FWS funding for FY2010 looked like it was in good shape and expected to have the same budget as FY2009.

Max Ethridge – Some funding has been found to compensate for the FY2009 budget cut. They are seeking restoration of funding for FY2010. He also thanked everyone for the Science Workshop.

Don Simpson – Has been doing briefings and reminding everyone to constantly promote WLCI to help keep it in the forefront of everyone's minds; this will help with future budgets. He stated that the PAPO group was up and running. WLCI needs to coordinate with them to help leverage funds and to use the data/science from JIO and PAPO. Renee has been attending the PAPO meetings when she is available.

Sharon Kyhl – Thought the workshop was good and liked the idea of moving it to the WLCI area. She also thought the WLCI expansion was a good idea.

John Linn – Along with other county commissioners, he is concerned about the Wilderness bill currently in Congress. He would like more information on how this bill will affect the work done by WLCI. He

suggested that any agency who gathers information concerning this issue should send that information to Congress.

Old Business

- The Project Ranking criteria were given final approval. Ranking will be done by the Coordination Team in June. LPDTs will be holding meetings in May to prioritize the projects in their areas. The BLM received \$1.445 million for the FY2009 budget to support the WLCI. This funding covered most of the 2009 projects. Funding is still unable to support research projects; however, the Coordination Team is working with STAC to develop a process to rank research projects if funding becomes available.
- Stimulus Funds – The 2009-2010 projects for stimulus funds provided through the BLM were divided into categories of critical migration corridors, habitat enhancement and invasive species, and riparian to be considered for stimulus funding. The BLM received funding for riparian projects. There were 6 projects on the list. The money received should cover the majority of the funding requests for these projects.
 - *Produce a pie chart showing FY2009 expenditures along with prior years (a pie chart provided at the meeting was broken out by number of projects for each category) – Coordination Team*
- Industry Outreach – The funding agreement with the Wildlife Heritage Foundation is in place and contributions can be accepted. The Coordination Team and Communication Team will create a handout to highlight some of the talking points of WLCI and to express our interest in not only accepting monetary contributions but also data and in-kind services. This handout should be a quick read to inform industry about WLCI. It would be helpful to acquaint industry with projects in their area. There is a need to contact wind energy developers soon and notify them of the work being done in southwest Wyoming.
 - *Create a WLCI informational handout – Coordination Team*
- Easements – Renee provided the status of a review with the BLM solicitor on easements. No impediments were identified although the solicitor has one more review to complete before a final determination. Based on information received so far, it seems favorable that the BLM funds can be used for easements. Easements are a tool in the tool box and can be used when needed.
- Discussions on the topic of easements included term easements. WLCI has not worked with a term lease or easement yet. Leases (term easements) can help save critical habitat for a short period of time and allow time for data/science to be gathered. They are less costly than perpetual easements and are in place for relatively short periods of time. However, there is a point when they are not as cost effective and a long-term agreement should be considered. Tapping existing sources such as the Land Trust Alliance, the Greater Yellowstone Working Committee, and NGOs, including The Nature Conservancy, would be beneficial in obtaining information on short-term easements. NGOs are starting to use leases, which are being considered to buy time in areas targeted for wind development. Landowners seem to be supportive of these short-term leases. Information needed includes identifying who should hold the lease, lease terms and conditions, methodology to determine valuation, and time frames. Other sources of information include the JIO and PAPO as they have had discussions on short-term leases. A plan for the use of easements (permanent and temporary) should be developed that considers the operational aspects of easements and provides information for ensuring long-term conservation actions are included in the easement agreements is a needed step to make a complete conservation habitat project.
 - *Place discussion of direction to formulate a plan for the use of easements on the next EC meeting agenda.*

Committee Reports

- Coordination Team has been spending time with the LPDTs and preparing for the Science Workshop. They have been attending meetings with the JIO, PAPO and Conservation Districts, and doing outreach as often as possible. The next few months they will be out in the field doing tours of projects.
- Monitoring Team – The team charter and operation plan have been completed. They have planned to meet quarterly but would like direction from STAC. They would like to have time on the agenda for the August Executive Committee Meeting to provide an update.
 - *Add Monitoring Team updates to August EC Meeting Agenda*
- DIMT – No one was present to provide a report, but Natalie and Sky remain active in providing access to data and information.
- Support Subcommittee – members need a list of 2010 projects to be able to schedule and coordinate project activities and requirements. They plan to hold a meeting after the project ranking meeting is complete so preparations can be made to complete regulatory compliance and other necessary planning.
 - *Schedule a call or meeting after 2010 project ranking in June.*

New Business

- WGFD State Action Plan - Glenn Pauley of Wyoming Game and Fish gave a PowerPoint presentation of the Wyoming State Action Plan. This informative presentation described the process for revising the Action Plan. Plans are to send the revision to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in October 2010.
- RC&D - A draft copy of the Cooperative Agreement for WLCI discretionary funds was presented. Review of the document and comments should be sent to renee_dana@blm.gov by June 15, 2009. The agreement allows for the RC&D to hold certain funds that can be used to pay for items like administrative materials or events like the March social.
 - *Review the Cooperative Agreement and provide comments to renee_dana@blm.gov by June 15.*
- WLCI Expansion – John Linn read a Letter of Support from the South Central Sage Grouse Local Working Group. Representatives from Saratoga Encampment Conservation District and Medicine Bow Conservation District were present to support the expansion. The motion to expand WLCI to include Carbon, Sweetwater, and Sublette counties east of the Continental Divide was approved.
 - *Compose a letter to the County Commissioners and Conservation Districts informing them of the expansion.*
 - *Adjust current map of WLCI working area to include expansion.*
 - *Add Conservation Districts to WLCI contact lists.*

Next Meeting

August 17, 2009, is the date for the next meeting in the Baggs/Sandstone area. Meeting time 8:00 am with project tours in the afternoon. Please bring a sack lunch.

Action Item Summary

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Produce a summary such as a pie chart showing how funds were spent for FY 2007-2009 for the next EC meeting.	Coordination Team	
Create a WLCI informational handout	Coordination Team	
Agenda topic for the next EC meeting: discuss direction to formulate a plan for the use of easements	Executive Committee	
Agenda topic for the next EC meeting: Monitoring Team updates	Coordination Team	
Schedule a call or meeting after 2010 project ranking in June	Support Subcommittee	
Compose a letter to the County Commissioners and Conservation Districts informing them of the expansion	Coordination Team	complete
Adjust current map of WLCI working area to include expansion	Coordination Team	complete
Add Conservation Districts to WLCI contact lists	Coordination Team	complete
Review the Cooperative Agreement and provide comments to renee_dana@blm.gov by June 15	Executive Committee	

Next EC meeting and field tour August 17, 2009, in the Baggs/Sandstone area

Agenda items due to Renee by August 5

RSVP by August 5

Place Monitoring Team update on the EC Meeting Agenda

Place plan for use of easements on the EC Meeting Agenda

Send materials for EC meeting to Coordination Team by August 10 for timely distribution and reproduction for the meeting.